



December 2005 AWIN Monthly Newsletter

Welcome...

...to the the monthly newsletter for the Arkansas Wireless Information Network, also known as AWIN. AWIN is a multi-phased approach to building the infrastructure for a statewide interoperable radio system. It will be used by first responders of all types across the state. As we move toward this new level of communication, we will continue to keep you informed of the progress.

AWIN Support

In partnership with the Arkansas State Police, the Department of Information Systems (DIS) operates the AWIN Call Center to support all AWIN subscribers (radio users) with technical assistance or AWIN-related requests. Technicians are on call in the event of any emergency. Call (501) 682-HELP (682-4357) or toll-free (800) 435-7989 or e-mail: awin.support@arkansas.gov

The DIS professionals who provide support for AWIN have fielded 182 customer requests to date.

Three County Pilot Project

A Tri-County Pilot Project is under development to serve as a demonstration of the effectiveness of the Arkansas Wireless Information Network. This project will focus on the use of the statewide digital radio system in effect at the local first responder level. The pilot project will provide upgraded dispatch units, connectivity to AWIN, as well as additional infrastructure needed at the county level.

The counties included in this project are Lonoke, Miller and Craighead Counties.

The purpose is to build a fully interoperable radio system for all public safety agencies in these three counties.

The Tri-County Pilot Project Manager works primarily with the county judge or the judge's designee. In some instances the county emergency manager is the primary point of contact. All communication for the project is funneled through this contact person.

As of this date, the participating counties have agreed to the current project plan, and funding has been allotted. Motorola is preparing the equipment order and will submit a project schedule once the order is made.

NEPA studies on all the tower sites

are near completion. Project managers are also awaiting final certification of the sites by FEMA.

New towers will be constructed in all three counties. Two new sites will be constructed in Miller County, one in Lonoke County, and Craighead County will also gain one new tower.

Prior to the implementation of the Tri-County project, all counties will undergo the cutover to AWIN. Area A, which includes Lonoke County, is already operating on the AWIN system. Miller and Craighead Counties will be cutover under Areas G and C respectively in early 2006.

AWIN radios will already be deployed in the Areas. Once this project is complete all primary and full-time first responders will be issued AWIN radios. Volunteer agencies will have Command and Control Radios for use in an emergency situation.

All major barriers that have been discovered under this project have been resolved. Though there are some concerns about construction of sites through the winter/spring months, they would most likely present minimal delays.

Once underway, the Three County Pilot Project could be completed as early as Spring 2006.

ADEM cutover

New console equipment was installed at the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management in Conway this week. Radio communications were down sporadically for about three days while technicians were working on the dispatch center and tower.



Cutovers at most sites usually take no more than a day, but typically just upgrades are required at those sites. In this instance, new equipment was needed and installed at the ADEM dispatch center.

Areas A, J and K complete

The AWIN project has seen a lot of progress over the past month. Three very populated areas of the state have now been cutover the new digital radio system. Areas A, J, and K were all converted in just over two weeks, with few problems.

There were several concerns before these three areas were cutover to AWIN. There were some tower sites that overlapped, and were used for communications by two different areas. Once those overlapping

towers were cutover, the remaining analog area did not have communications on that particular tower. That problem was resolved when each area was converted to the digital system.

Only two areas of the state remain on an analog radio system. Areas C and G will be cutover to AWIN beginning 2006.



Send us your story

Do you have a story you would like to share with other end users? Any advice you want to pass along to agencies that are awaiting a cutover in their area? We want to know how AWIN is working for you! Please send your comments to awin@arkansas.gov.



---Coming Events & Reminders-----Coming Events & Reminders---



<DIS Wishes you a Merry Christmas>

&

a Happy New Year



Arkansas Wireless Information Network

One Capitol Mall

P.O. Box 3155

Little Rock, Arkansas 72203